

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application, as amended, and consideration of the following remarks. Claims 11 and 17 have been amended. Claims 1-10 and 21 have been canceled as being drawn to a non-elected species. Claims 15 and 16 have been canceled. Claims 22-30 have been added. Claims 11-14, 17-20 and 22-30 remain pending. Claims 11-20 stand rejected as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

Amendments

Amendments to the Claims

Applicant has amended the claims to more particularly point out what Applicant regards as the invention, specifically, a wafer processing system comprising at least one surface tension gradient device capable of supporting a process in a liquid meniscus, the surface tension gradient device including a proximity head including a plurality of source inlets, a plurality of source outlets. The system also including an in-situ sensor for monitoring a result of the process and a system controller being coupled to the in-situ sensor and the surface tension gradient device, the system controller including a process recipe. No new matter has been added as a result of these amendments or the new claims.

Rejections

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 11-20 stand rejected as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of the Rushford reference (WO 02/32825) or the Mitsumori reference (US Pat 6,230,722).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as neither of the cited references teach nor even suggest a wafer processing system comprising at least one surface tension gradient device capable of supporting a process in a liquid meniscus, the surface tension gradient device including a proximity head including a plurality of source inlets, a plurality of source outlets. The system also including an in-situ sensor for monitoring a result of the process and a system controller being coupled to the in-situ sensor and the surface tension gradient device, the system controller including a process recipe.

More specifically, neither of the cited references teach nor even suggest a liquid meniscus that is supported by proximity head and that the proximity head includes a plurality of source inlets in the proximity head, a plurality of source outlets in the proximity head.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 11, 28 and 30 is not anticipated by the cited references, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Dependent claims 12-14, 17-20, 22-27 and 29 depend from one of the independent claims 11 and 28, and are patentably distinct over the cited references for at least the same reasons as the described above for claims 11 and 28 and therefore request the rejections of claims 12-14, 17-20 be withdrawn and claims 11-14, 17-20 and 22-30 be allowed.

SUMMARY

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

If the Examiner determines the prompt allowance of these claims could be facilitated by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact George B. Leavell at (408) 749-6900, ext 6923.

Deposit Account Authorization

Authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Ref# LAM2P425) for any charges that may be due or credit our account for any overpayment. Furthermore, if an extension is required, then Applicant hereby requests such extension.

Respectfully submitted,

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